

tion and tourism programs associated with the upcoming Four Hundred Year Jamestown Anniversary in 2007 sponsored by the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities, and the National Park Service.

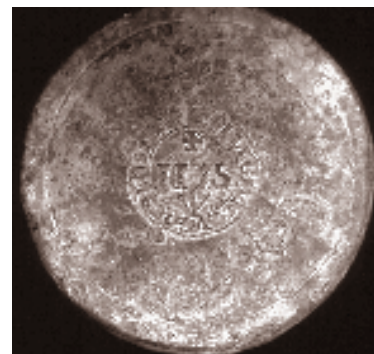
Mary Ellen N. Hodges is an archeologist with the Virginia Department of Transportation, Suffolk.

E. Randolph Turner, III is an archeologist with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond.

Much of this article is adapted from "Camden: Another Look Seventeen Years After Registration", an article by Mary Ellen N. Hodges published in the Fall, 1986 issue of the magazine *Notes on Virginia*. Appreciation is extended to the Virginia Department of Historic Resources for permission to reprint this material.

Ellen R. Cowie, James B. Petersen,
and Bruce J. Bourque

Research and Preservation at Norridgewock NHL



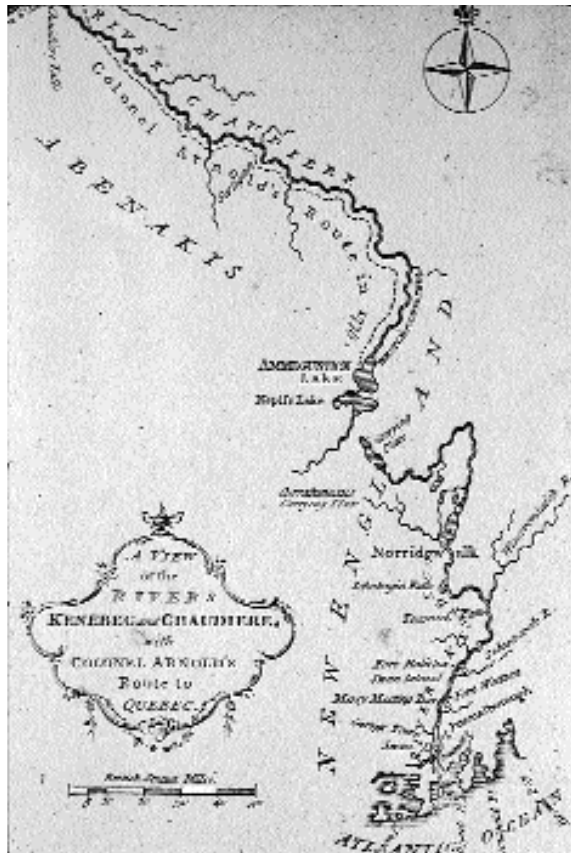
Communion vessel lid inscribed with the seal of Sebastian Rale's Jesuit Seminary at Lyon found at Old Point. Photo by Bruce J. Bourque.

The Historic Contact period village at Norridgewock is well-known in colonial history as a 17th- and 18th-century Native American community on the border between French and English colonial territories (Morrison 1984). It was reported as early as the beginning of the 17th century, perhaps by Samuel de Champlain and certainly by Samuel Purchas in 1625, although it is best known through accounts of the Jesuit priest Sebastian Rale who later resided there for about 30 years (Prins and Bourque 1987; Sprague 1906). Although much has been written about the Historic Contact period native community at Norridgewock, the archeological potential of several sites at the locale has not been demonstrated until recently (Cowie and Petersen 1992; Prins and Bourque 1987). This overview of the Norridgewock Archaeological District National Historic Landmark provides an example of the compatibility of both site preservation goals and archeological research, and shows that the two can beneficially work hand-in-hand.

The Norridgewock National Historic Landmark presently encompasses three separate archeological properties in the towns of Norridgewock, Madison, and Starks in Somerset County, Maine; the Old Point Mission site (ME 69-2), the Sandy River site (ME 69-24) and the Tracy Farm site (ME 69-11). Although the Old Point Mission and the Tracy Farm sites were previously known to local artifact collectors and, in the case of the Old Point Mission, from a rich his-

torical record, the University of Maine at Farmington Archaeology Research Center (UMF) conducted the first systematic excavations in the area in 1988 and 1990. All three sites are located on land adjacent to the Weston Hydroelectric Project, a facility owned and operated by Central Maine Power Company (CMP), the largest utility in the state. Like many such facilities in Maine, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission license for the Weston Project was due to expire in the early 1990s. UMF was contracted by CMP to conduct archeological phase I survey and phase II testing along the margins of the 39.8 kilometer (24.8 mile) long hydroelectric head pond. Of the 41 aboriginal sites identified by UMF, four were found to contain deposits dating to the Historic Contact period. Of these four sites, three were determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. These same three sites were later designated as the Norridgewock Archaeological District National Historic Landmark on April 12, 1993.

The Sandy River site (ME 69-24) is located in the town of Starks near the confluence of the Kennebec and Sandy rivers. First identified by UMF investigators in 1988 (Torrence, et al. 1990), phase II testing in 1990 identified the presence of singularly well-preserved deeply buried deposits dating from 600 to 300 years ago. Several hearths, a probable roasting pit, and a buried living surface were found beneath buried alluvial deposits indicative of frequent flooding. One of the most exciting finds was the discovery of a large portion of a St. Lawrence Iroquoian pot in a datable fea-



ture. Belonging to a type rarely found in Maine sites (Petersen 1990), radiocarbon analysis dated the pot to A.D. 1450 +/- 110. Discovery of carbonized corn, squash, and other plant remains in two features revealed evidence of seasonal occupation. Analysis of these and other findings indicate that the Sandy River site was probably abandoned as a habitation when its occupants moved to more permanent year-round settlements on higher, rarely flooded ground at and around the Tracy Farm and the Old Point Mission villages.

Although cultivation has not damaged the deeply buried Sandy River deposits, erosion caused by the fluctuating water levels of the Weston Hydroelectric Project head pond threatens portions of the site (Cowie and Petersen 1992). In response to this threat, current plans call for mitigation of a small portion of the property through intensive excavation.

The Tracy Farm site is located 500 meters (1,640') to the north of the Sandy River locale. Long known to amateur collectors, the site was first subjected to professional investigation when anthropologist Harald E.L. Prins visited it in 1983. Checking out a 1647 account suggesting that the earliest Norridgewock

community was located on the west bank of the Kennebec across from the later Old Point Mission, Prins found evidence of occupation on the surface of cultivated land within the Tracy property (Prins and Bourque 1987:138). Subsequent visits to the site, including one with Bruce Bourque of the Maine State Museum, affirmed the possibility that Tracy Farm was the setting of the early Norridgewock settlement.

First tested by UMF archeologists in 1988, Tracy Farm was more intensively examined during phase II testing in 1990. Many of the more than 15,000 artifacts recovered during testing near the surface or in the hearths, pits, and other features preserved below the plow zone were associated with terminal Late Woodland and Historic Contact period occupations (Cowie and Petersen 1992). Glass beads, European white-clay tobacco pipes, and other unmistakable evidence of European contact were found in several features. Half of the contents of all features uncovered during this phase were removed for study and preservation for future investigation.

A post mold outline measuring 25 meters (82') long by 5 meters (16.4') wide uncovered at the site represents the first discovery of archeological evidence of a longhouse dwelling found in northern New England (Cowie and Petersen 1992). One of the three pit features within the longhouse was tested. Analysis of the contents of this feature revealed a European white clay tobacco pipe bowl, glass beads, animal bones, and carbonized wood, butternut shell, and other plant remains. Collectively, these deposits represent a unique resource preserving evidence of the time when Native Americans were first interacting with Europeans in the region.

Erosion presently threatens the southeastern margins of the site deposit at Tracy Farm. Responding to this threat, mitigation excavations were conducted in this area during the summer of 1995 by a UMF field school in archeology. The

View of east wall profile of test units N50-51 E190, showing complex stratigraphy and features 2,4,5 at the Sandy River site. Feature 5 has been radiocarbon dated to A.D. 1650. Note range pole marked in 20 cm increments. Photo courtesy UMF ARC.





Catholic communion service artifacts found at Old Point. Photo by Bruce J. Bourque.

project was sponsored by CMP and the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, and supported by a volunteer project of the Maine Archaeological Society. Findings from field school investigations will be incorporated in Cowie's dissertation research.

The Old Point Mission site is located on another high terrace opposite the Tracy Farm on the east bank of the Kennebec River in the towns of Norridgewock and Madison. The history of Norridgewock mission village at Old Point is both fascinating and tragic. Extensively documented and widely known, the Abenaki village and associated Jesuit mission at Old Point played a significant role in the Indian and French struggle to maintain control in the region during the late-17th and early-18th centuries. The Old Point mission was originally established in the mid-1690s when Jesuit missionary Sebastian Rasle travelled from Quebec to Norridgewock. Shortly thereafter, many Abenakis living on the Tracy Farm site moved across the river to Old Point. Father Rasle lived at Norridgewock for nearly 30 years during a tumultuous time of warfare and frontier conflict. The Old Point mission village was abandoned and destroyed by British troops during Queen Anne's War (1702-1713). Rebuilt with British help when the New Englanders tried to win the Abenakis to

General view of the long house post mold pattern at the Tracy Farm site, facing southwest. Photo courtesy UMF ARC.



their side after the war ended, Norridgewock nevertheless ultimately became a staging ground for raids against British colonizers encroaching on Indian lands along the Kennebec River. This cycle of encroachment and retaliation finally led to the outbreak of a new conflict in 1722 most widely known to today as Dummer's War, after the Massachusetts lieutenant-governor who led provincial troops against the Indians until 1727. Unsuccessfully attacked when the conflict first broke out, the town was destroyed when a force of more than 150 New England troops killed Rasle and as many as 60 townsfolk on August 23, 1724. Reoccupied by a small group of Abenaki in 1726, the site was finally abandoned in 1754 after the Kennebec Proprietors constructed posts uncomfortably close downriver at Fort Western and Fort Halifax.

Interest in the Norridgewock mission extends back to the early 1800s (Prins and Bourque 1987). Father Benedict Fenwick of Boston instigated purchase of a portion of Old Point in 1833 and sponsored construction of a monument honoring Rasle at the locale. Ironically, the Abenakis killed in the attack are not mentioned on the monument's bronze plaque. Warren K. Moorehead conducted the earliest known professional archeological investigations at Old Point during the early 1920s (Moorehead 1922). In 1967, Dean Snow, then a professor at the University of Maine, visited the site and recorded it in the Maine Site Survey files. The locale was then tested by UMF in 1988 and 1990.

Testing by UMF investigators confirmed that looters drawn to the site in part by the presence of the Rasle monument have extensively damaged significant portions of Old Point archeological deposits for more than a century. Hundreds of artifacts, including portions of Rasle's communion service, have been taken from the site. Many of these collections have been since donated to the Maine State Museum, which has recently mounted an exhibit featuring them.

Supported by the Maine Historical Preservation Commission, UMF, and volunteers, Cowie conducted limited fieldwork at Old Point in 1992 and 1994 as part of her dissertation research. These field investigations focused on the delineation of the historically-documented palisade and uncovered several thousand artifacts, along with over 140 post molds, storage pits, hearths, and other features.

The absence of aboriginal manufactures in Historic Contact period deposits at Old Point affirms that the Abenakis abandoned much of their traditional technology by the time they moved to the Jesuit mission. Site deposits contain glass beads, wine, and case bottle fragments, copper and brass tinkling cones, projectile points, and

beads, metal fragments, gun hardware, lead shot, and European gun flints. Discovery of English gun flints suggests contacts with British traders farther down the Kennebec River.

Only 12 features have been fully tested thus far. Atlantic salmon and other animal bones and floral remains of corn and European peas have been identified in portions of feature fill subjected to flotation analyses that separate small bones and other usually undetected remains from excavated soil.

Concerned by continued threats caused by looters and recreational vehicle drivers motoring along the several dirt roads that criss-cross the site, Bruce Bourque suggested that the Norridgewock area be examined for potential National Historic Landmark nomination as part of the Historic Contact theme study in 1989. Shortly thereafter, UMF staff members Ellen Cowie and James Petersen offered to contribute findings made through their Weston Hydroelectric Project surveys to the study. Working together, Cowie, Petersen, and Bourque helped prepare the nomination form, which was presented by Bourque at a meeting of the History Areas Advisory Board in Washington on January 12, 1993. Three months later, the Secretary of the Interior formally designated Norridgewock as a National Historic Landmark.

Although landowners have supported the designation, none have yet approved erection of a plaque that may direct further unwanted attention to a site long threatened by destructive looting. Designation has, however, contributed to preservation efforts at Norridgewock. The recognition of

Tracy Farm and Sandy River as nationally-significant sites, for example, facilitated development of a conservation easement protecting site deposits written by Maine Historic Preservation Commission archaeologist Arthur Spiess when the Tracy property was foreclosed by the Farmer's Home Administration in 1994. Later that year, Dr. Spiess worked with the National Park Service to develop

a plan for Historic Preservation Fund support for Cowie's dissertation research at Old Point that balanced research needs with preservation requirements.

The future of the Old Point Mission site remains uncertain. The Madison Paper Company, which owns most of the site area, has clearly expressed an interest in protecting the site. Looters, however, continue to damage site deposits. New partnerships need to be developed between scholars, government agencies, state professional and avocational societies, and the local community to increase public awareness of the importance of protecting these national treasures. Only then can the future of the past at Norridgewock be assured for all Americans.

References

- Cowie, Ellen R., and James B. Petersen, 1992, Archaeological Phase II Testing of the Weston Project (FERC No. 2325), Somerset County, Maine. Report prepared by University of Maine at Farmington Archaeology Research Center. Submitted to Central Maine Power Company, Augusta.
- Moorehead, Warren K., 1922, A Report on the Archaeology of Maine. Department of Anthropology, Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts.
- Morrison, Kenneth M., 1984, *The Embattled Northeast: The Elusive Ideal of Alliance in Abenaki-Euroamerican Relations*. University of California Press, Berkeley.
- Petersen, James B., 1990, Evidence of the Saint Lawrence Iroquoians in Northern New England: Population Movement, Trade, or Stylistic Borrowing? *Man in the Northeast* 40:31-39.
- Prins, Harald E.L., and Bruce J. Bourque, 1987, Norridgewock: Village Translocation on the New England-Acadian Frontier. *Man in the Northeast* 33:137-158.
- Sprague, John F., 1906, *Sebastien Raslé: A Maine Tragedy of the Eighteenth Century*. Heintzemann Press, Boston.
- Torrence, Corbett McP., Michael J. Heckenberger, and James B. Petersen, 1990, An Archaeological Phase I Survey of the Weston Project (FERC No. 2325), Somerset County, Maine. Report prepared by University of Maine at Farmington Archaeology Research Center. Submitted to Central Maine Power Company, Augusta.

Ellen R. Cowie is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Pittsburgh.

James B. Peterson is the Director, Archaeology Research Center, University of Maine at Farmington. Bruce J. Bourque is the State Archeologist at the Maine State Museum, Augusta.

A monument to Sebastian Rale and the Indian victims of the 1724 British attack at Old Point. Bruce Bourque (left) and Alarick Faulkner (right) in foreground. Photo by Robert Grumet, 1990.



Historic Contact Theme Study Project Personnel

National Historic Landmark		Indiana Division of Historic Preservation and Archeology:	James R. Jones, III (1989-1991)
Program Coordinator:	Ben Levy		
Archeological Assistance		Maine Historic Preservation Commission:	Arthur E. Spiess
Program Project Coordinator:	Richard C. Waldbauer	Maryland Historical Trust:	Richard B. Hughes
Mid-Atlantic Region Project		Massachusetts Historical Commission:	James W. Bradley (1989-1990)
Coordinator:	Lloyd N. Chapman		Constance Crosby (1990-1992)
Project Director:	Robert S. Grumet	Michigan Bureau of History:	John Halsey (1989-1991)
National Park Service Ad Hoc			
Advisory Committee:	Michelle C. Aubry	New Hampshire Division of Historic Resources:	Gary Hume
	Muriel Crespi	New Jersey Historic Preservation Office:	Terry Karschner
	Susan L. Henry	New York State Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau:	Charles Florance (1989-1990)
	John Knoerl		Bruce Fullem (1990-1992)
	C. Timothy McKeown	Ohio Historic Preservation Office:	Alan C. Tonetti (1989-1991)
	Jan Townsend	Pennsylvania Bureau of Historic Preservation:	Kurt Carr
Archeological NHL Committee	David S. Brose, Chair (1989-1991)	Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission:	Paul A. Robinson
(A joint committee of the	Shereen Lerner, Chair (1991-present)	Vermont Division for Historic Preservation:	Giovanna Peebles
Society for American	Stanley A. Ahler	Virginia Department of Historic Resources:	E. Randolph Turner, III
Archaeology and the Society	J. Barto Arnold, III		
for Historical Archaeology)	Jeanne E. Arnold	West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office:	James Bloemker (1989-1991)
	Mary C. Beaudry		Michael Pauley (1991-1992)
	Ian W. Brown		
	Albert A. Dekin, Jr.		
State Historic Preservation Office Coordinators			
Connecticut Historical Commission:	David Poirier		
Delaware Bureau of Archaeology			
and Historic Preservation:	Alice Guerrant		
District of Columbia Historic			
Preservation Division:	Nancy B. Kassner (1989-1990)		
	Laura Henley Dean (1991-1992)		

CRM

U.S. Department of
the Interior
National Park Service
Cultural Resources
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, DC 20013-7127

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE \$300

FIRST CLASS MAIL
Postage & Fees Paid
U. S. Department of the Interior
G-83

VOLUME 18 • NO. 7
Cultural Resources
Washington, DC